



Doug Demosi, AICP
Planning Director

Mike Hughes, P.E.
County Engineer

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission Members

From: Doug Demosi, Planning Director
Mike Hughes, County Engineer

Date: January 25, 2016

Subject: 2015 Work Schedule Report and 2016 Work Schedule

Planning Commission members will recall that a list of planning projects was distributed during the January 26, 2015 Planning Commission meeting. The purpose of this memorandum is to report on the progress of those projects, as well as to outline a work schedule for 2016.

Overall, the County's Planning and Engineering Department saw more sustained growth and submittals than we had in previous years. Staff expects this trend to continue into 2016.

2015 Project Update

Completed Projects:

- **Zoning Ordinance Amendments**

Staff researched and completed to following Ordinance amendments:

- Rural Retreats – Staff had received a number of requests regarding the establishment of event venues on rural property. Many of these properties contained existing structures that the owners/prospective owners wanted to convert into facilities for weddings and other related events. The Zoning Ordinance does contain regulations for agri-tourism that minimally regulates these types of uses. Most of the requests, however, have been for property that is not currently, nor has ever been, used for agricultural purposes. Staff distributed the original amendments at the Planning Commission's January 26, 2015 meeting. After three public hearings that resulted in changes to the



Rutherford County Planning and Engineering Department

ONE PUBLIC SQUARE SOUTH, SUITE 200 MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE 37130
PHONE 615.898.7730 FAX 615.898.7823

Doug Demosi, AICP
Planning Director

Mike Hughes, P.E.
County Engineer

proposed amendments, the Planning Commission recommended approval at their May 11, 2015 meeting. The Board of Commissioners approved the amendments at their June 11, 2015 meeting.

- Setback Regulations for Mini Warehouse Developments – Standards were added to the Zoning Ordinance for mini warehouse developments during the comprehensive zoning re-write in 2011/2012. One of these standards included a 65-foot setback for all storage-related activity. The primary concern raised by developers was that such a large setback, as opposed to 15 or 20 feet, can make site design a challenge. It also precluded the ability to use the backs of the buildings as part of the required buffer. After researching how surrounding communities regulated mini warehouse setbacks, Staff presented a report and recommendation to the Planning Commission. Ultimately, the Planning Commission recommended changing the requirement as follows:

*The setback for such activities (i.e. buildings and outdoor storage) shall be a minimum of sixty-five (65) feet, **provided that if there is access on only one side of the building**, the setbacks of the district can apply. The buildings may be used as part of the required buffer **if the design and appearance is approved** by the Board of Zoning Appeal or Planning Commission, as applicable, consistent with Section 1104 of this Ordinance.*

This amendment was recommended for approval at the Planning Commission's November 9, 2015 meeting and approved at the Board of Commissioner's December 14, 2015 meeting.

- **Update Planning Commission By-Laws**

A review of the Planning Commission's By-Laws revealed the need to make a number of revisions, especially in light of the new Zoning Ordinance taking effect at the beginning of 2013. Staff provided the Planning Commission with the proposed amendments at their September 28, 2015 meeting. After discussion, the Planning Commission voted to adopt the newly revised By-Laws.

- **Traffic Sheds**

The Planning Commission continued discussion and deliberation on utilizing traffic sheds in Rutherford County. The preliminary analysis recommended that the County consider using traffic sheds in the areas of the unincorporated County outside of the Urban Growth Boundaries. No decision has been made at this point as to what direction this tool could take. An open house/information



Doug Demosi, AICP
Planning Director

Mike Hughes, P.E.
County Engineer

session is scheduled for January 21, 2016 to continue the dialogue with local stakeholders.

2016 Work Schedule

Staff has also identified the following projects for 2016:

- **Zoning Ordinance Amendments**

Staff has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed or clarified in the Zoning Ordinance. These issues include:

- Homeless Shelters – Staff has received requests regarding the establishment of homeless shelters in the unincorporated County. After reviewing the Zoning Ordinance, it was determined that no regulations exist for these types of facilities. Staff has received a great deal of information from the Planning Advisory Service for assistance in developing regulations. With the population of Rutherford County expected to grow even more between now and 2040, Staff expects homelessness to become a larger issue.
- Tiny Homes – There has been a trend in recent years on a national scale for more “simpler” living in what are called “tiny homes.” A review of planning literature reveals that these “tiny homes” are essentially very elaborate recreational vehicles. Most have kitchens, bathrooms, sleeping areas, etc. Some even have loft areas. While these “tiny homes” aren’t generally intended for permanent occupancy, many people desire to use them as such. There are a number of issues to consider with permanent occupancy, including zoning, building codes, fire codes and septic disposal. Staff has taken a number of phone calls on this issue and is aware that other areas in the State have, as well. Staff proposes to research this issue more this year and possibly develop some regulations for them.
- Outdoor Shooting Ranges – Staff receives inquiries on the establishment of outdoor shooting ranges at least one or two times per year. Originally, shooting ranges were classified as Entertainment and Amusement Services and were only permitted in commercial and industrial zones. When the regulations for Entertainment and Amusement Services were amended in 2014 to separate indoor uses from outdoor uses, Staff had intended to create additional regulations for shooting ranges, recognizing their unique challenges. Staff feels that the time is right to move forward on this issue.
- Borrow Pit Regulations – The current borrow pit regulations were adopted in 2010 and were included in the 2013 Zoning Ordinance essentially unchanged. After enforcing these regulations for the last five to six years, Staff has identified some issues that should be addressed. This was on the 2015 Work



Doug Demosi, AICP
Planning Director

Mike Hughes, P.E.
County Engineer

Schedule but was not addressed due to the urgency and time commitments for some of the other projects.

- **Area Plan – Buchanan Area**

During the rezoning hearing for the Brenda Benz Property along Manchester Highway, there was discussion on creating a “gateway” for this interchange, as it is the first interstate interchange within Rutherford County coming from the southeast. Staff has always believed that after the Comprehensive Plan was completed that several of the “Centers” that were identified should have a more detailed plan prepared for their areas. Considering the development potential of this Center, the Epps Mill Major Employment Center, Staff feels that this would be a good candidate to begin this process. At this point, Staff is not sure how this study should proceed, but intends to discuss it with the Planning Commission for their input.

- **Amendments to the Subdivision Regulations**

Recent changes to State Law will necessitate the amendment of our Subdivision Regulations. The County’s Engineering Staff has also identified some amendments that need to be made regarding conflicting information on road section requirements in the text and in the construction details. Furthermore, Engineering Staff is developing additional construction details (i.e. pavement trench repair, driveway entrance ramps, etc.).

- **County Vehicle Maintenance Facility**

County Engineering Staff has been involved with the concept/master planning for a new vehicle maintenance facility with the Materials Management Department, Fire and Rescue Department, Vehicle Maintenance and the Deputy Mayor. Staff expects this process to continue throughout 2016.

- **TDEC Audit of the County’s Construction Stormwater Program**

Every five to seven years, officials from TDEC audit the County’s Stormwater Program. The last audit was completed in July of 2009. This audit will identify any deficiencies in the program that the County needs to address. The audit is expected in late February/early March of this year.

- **Mezzanine Improvements**

While not a planning project per se, Staff has been in contact with the County’s Maintenance Department in regards to making some renovations to the Mezzanine Meeting Room. The changes discussed have been to create some storage areas for extra chairs, equipment, etc., a separate storage area for



Rutherford County Planning and Engineering Department

ONE PUBLIC SQUARE SOUTH, SUITE 200 MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE 37130
PHONE 615.898.7730 FAX 615.898.7823

Doug Demosi, AICP
Planning Director

Mike Hughes, P.E.
County Engineer

Channel 19 equipment, new tables/chairs and fresh paint. This is a work in progress that Staff hopes to have completed by the summer.

Staff requests the Planning Commission to review this work schedule and to let Staff know if there are any other items that you would like us to work on this calendar year. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss any of these items in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mr. Hughes.

